



Regional Service Council Minutes Region # 9

Meeting Date: 6/22/07
Meeting Location: Hendricks County Dept. of Child Services
6781 E US Hwy. 36, Avon, IN 46123

Council Members Present:

Steve Vaughn - Director, Montgomery County DCS, Jana Minks - Montgomery County DCS, Tim Miller - Director, Morgan County DCS, and Char Burkett-Sims - DCS , Region 9 Regional Manager

Guests Present:

Andrea Goodwin - Hendricks County DCS, Kamilla Aeschliman - Boone County DCS, Mark Fairchild - Region 9 Community Partners for Child Safety, Patti Harmless - Putnam County Youth Development and Community Youth Services Bureau

Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order at 9:00 AM.

Practice Indicators:

Effectiveness of Services

Practice Indicator information was presented. There was discussion regarding what kind of information is needed or would be helpful for the Regional Services Council. Is the data that we provide informative? This will be an ongoing discussion with input from all of the council members as well as guests from the community.

- There was some initial input to suggest that the data provided is very informative. However, there was a suggestion that the provision of too much data may result in the data not being reviewed.
- It was further suggested that there is a need for more education on what DCS is doing to improve services.
- Input was provided that quarterly data is best to be provided in order to better understand the monthly statistics.
- Some factors that should be considered that can affect statistics include:
 - County population, poverty rates, and other unique dynamics
 - Resources within each community
 - Experience of staff

Factors that might be considered in presentations to the Regional Services Council could include:

- Discussing how to reduce costs of services while staying focused on quality and effectiveness.
- Presenting the budget and county/regional costs. Suggestions from the Regional Services Council would be helpful to improve effectiveness of services.
- The impact of hiring more FCMS on the identification and delivery of services to families.

- Discussion regarding the changes and shifting DCS focus on practice reform and best case work practice.
- How could Child Protection Teams be utilized in a more effective way?

Relative Placements:

There was a discussion regarding the need for relative placements and what might be done to better support relatives who are caring for children. Some things that were discussed were:

- Policy change regarding the payment to unlicensed relative placement of \$25 per day.
- The need to develop informational packets to provide to relatives on what resources they might need and what is available in their community.

Substance Abuse:

The majority of families with whom the DCS office in Region 9 are involved have substance abuse/addictions. Region 9 has identified a need for services that are more responsive to the needs of the parents with whom we are involved. Issues with existing services include:

- Some providers kick clients out of the program with no further services when they relapse or miss meetings.
- Many drug treatment programs focus only on the addictive behavior and do not address the underlying issues.
- Many programs have waiting lists and cannot accept new clients consistent with the treatment needs of the clients with whom the agency is working.
- There are not enough programs in some communities.

Some states have implemented innovations that seem to be effective. Some of the characteristics of successful models include:

- The use of a recovery coach. The coach is someone who can advocate and guide a client through the whole treatment process ensuring that the client is receiving the appropriate treatment that will meet their specific needs and to provide more support and resources to the family members, children, spouse, etc.
- Some promising programs which specifically address the needs of women with children and include child care and transportation services as part of the service milieu have proven to be very successful.
- The provision of education for children of the parents with whom we are working seems to be critical as research shows that there is a higher likelihood for children of addicted parents to have a substance abuse issue.
- Drug Treatment Court has proven to be beneficial as a criminal diversion process. This same process could be utilized in CHINS proceedings.

Char proposed the idea to invite substance treatment providers to the next council meeting. All in favor of this idea:

- A suggestion was made to discuss the needs to existing Substance Abuse providers to solicit interest in providing identified services.
- A concern was expressed that some providers may not be able or willing to provide the types of services we are identifying.
- The available funding of these types of services was also a concern expressed. Can service expansion be done within existing funding levels?

Child Advocacy Center Update:

Andrea Goodwin met with Emily Perry from the Indianapolis Institute, key stakeholders such as a child advocate, and prosecutors. We are still in the first phases. Emily has met with the Board of Directors at Hendricks Regional Health and they are onboard and have agreed to help in funding. The hospital has also graciously reserved space for the Finding Words Training. The Prosecutors Office is also on board in funding the project. The plan is to start the advocacy center in Hendricks County and once it is up and running to then proceed within the region.

Community Partners for Child Safety:

Mark Fairchild presented data to the council on the progress.

Referrals continue to come in strong. The number of referrals continues to rise each month. They currently have 3 liasions and in the process of hiring 2 more to prepare for the next school year. The largest referral source is DCS, second largest source is the school systems. As of now 80% of all of the cases coming in are successfully engaged in services. The processes are improving and they are developing a positive working relationship with DCS and the school systems.

Regional Council Meeting Dates:

The question was posed once again about meeting dates. It was suggested that if meetings were scheduled for a regular day and time that there might be a better chance for all members and external partners to attend. All agreed that were present that the 4th Friday of each month would possibly be a good date.

Next Meeting:

Date: 8-24-07

Location: Hendricks Co. Department of Child Services, 6181 E. US Hwy. 36,
Avon, IN 46123

Time: 9:00 AM

Meeting concluded at 10:40 AM